

STUDENTS ABROAD HOUSING CONCERNS

FALL 2020 MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

Dear Middlebury College Residential Life Office,

The signatories of this letter write in protest of the unacceptable and discriminatory treatment of international students outlined in the June 26 ResLife room draw update.

Citing a “continuing uncertainty regarding travel,” the Residential Life unfairly assigned **all** international and U.S students who are currently abroad in the August draw, regardless of whether our individual situations present little or no obstacles for us to return to Middlebury safely this fall. Despite many of us being able to commit to being on campus as early as July 6, you have decided to defer us to an **“open draw for remaining spaces”**. We are outraged by the College’s continuous disregard of our specific realities as international students and cannot help but feel as a permanent secondary concern in whichever decision the administration takes.

Earlier this year, on March 10 2020, the College decided to evacuate our campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic and asked students to leave until further notice. While we appreciated the efforts to contain the spread of the virus, this hasty decision disproportionately affected international students. We wrote to you with [our concerns at the time](#), but were still asked to make challenging and even endangering decisions unique to international students. We grappled with our visa statuses being threatened, and the majority of us who were not allowed to stay at Middlebury were asked either to stay with third parties within the U.S; or to risk long-haul travels amidst the uncertainty of contagion and border crossings.

Now, facing the possibility of returning to Middlebury, we are barely acknowledged in the housing decision-making and are discriminated against solely on being international and U.S students who are currently abroad. The briefness and vagueness of the email displayed a deep lack of understanding of the international experience. Far from being one homogenous group, we come from over 74 countries and regions—something we must tirelessly bring to light—and, thus, we are not equally affected by current travel restrictions. We demand greater clarity on how our indicated intent on the July 6th form affects our position in the room draw. Currently, the

Department of Homeland Security **only** restricts [the entry of foreign nationals](#) that have been in China, Iran, the Schengen area, the U.K, Ireland, and Brazil in the two weeks prior to their arrival to the U.S. To request that **all** international and U.S students who are currently abroad, regardless of their nationality, participate in the August room draw under the assumption we are a liability to planning due to our status is disproportionate and discriminatory.

While we understand that there are many challenges facing the housing team this semester, there are more options available to our community than preventing international students and U.S students who are currently abroad from equitably participating in the housing draw. We cannot and will not be isolated from our domestic peers in an aspect so defining of our college life as our residential experience. We object that we may be kept from living with our peers and asked to form “roommate groups” that solely consist of other international students.

With this in mind, we ask you to hold the room draw for all students on the same day. Alternatively, we urge you to set aside housing options in all dormitories, suites, and houses on campus for international students and those relegated to the August draw. We are not an afterthought to be fit in in whatever space is left available.

As the administration and the Residential Life Office, you have a commitment to equity and fair treatment of your students. While we are all struggling to make these crucial decisions about our futures, we remind you of the unique circumstances of international students. It is unacceptable for Middlebury to put our international diversity on display when convenient, but to fail in heeding to our voices and needs. As much as our domestic peers, we are excited to be back, to reunite with our peers, and to thrive at *our* college.

We count on you to put in place the measures needed to redress this situation.

This petition was co-authored by the ISO Executive Board (Smith Gakuya '23, Arthur Martins '22.5, Masud Tyree Lewis '22, Tenzin Gyalmo '23, Michelle Liu '22), Miraal Naseer '21, Elsa Korpi '22, Saif Panday '21, Isaac Byrne '21 and Leily Manafi '22.

This document and associated form are managed by the ISO's Executive Board. Please contact us via email at iso@middlebury.edu or on instagram at @midd.iso for more information.

Sign the petition at go.middlebury.edu/housingpetition

Signatures Received *via form*:

Masud Tyree Lewis '22

Tenzin Gyalmo '23

Smith Gakuya '23

Arthur Martins '22.5

Ibtsam & '23

Myles Maxie '22

Adam Wisco '22

Paula Somoza '21.5

Paul Flores-Clavel '22

Igor Todorovic, 2023

Warrrd Nour 2023

Mahnoor Bhatti '22

Florence Wu '22

Payoja Adhikari '23

Nhan Huynh

Jacqueline Blinoff '22

Elsa Korpi '22

W. Steven Montilla M.

Reid Macfarlane '21

Emmanuel Tamrat '22

Nora Lima Dahl 2022

Hugo Böcker '22

Ifechukwu Onuorah '20

Amun 2023.5

Chloe Fleischer '21.5

Claire Greenburger 23.5

Kate Sadoff 2023.5
Mykhailo Poklad '22
Diana Diaz 2021
Ivo Verzone, 2023
Christian Poulsen 2022
Khanya Thunyiswa '22
Miraal Naseer 2021
Raquel Maldonado Moron, Class
of 2020
Shafneen Shah'22
Flor Fernandez Montes '21
Ideal Dowling '22
Saif Panday ('21)
Afua Bonsu 2023
Marci Urban 22.5
Issa Saba 2020
charlotte gray 2021
Isabelle Cochran 2022
Cindy Cardona '22
Willson Moore 2022
Zoey Ellis '22
Jenny Gould 2023.5
Madelyn Lander, 2023
Sara Massey '23
Alex Myers 2023
Abe Hoffman 2023

Katherine DeFrancesco 2023

Maria Espinola Moreno '23
Ali DePaolo '23
Zayn Makdessi 2023
Samuel Ehram 2023

John Cambefort, '21.5

Lucas Donavan-Lafuente, 2023

Muhammad Faisal Hussain '21

Benjamin Johnson 2021

Cheryl Engmann '22

Cheko Mkocheke 2022

Gillinda James 2021

Haley Glover, 2021

Leili Manafi '22

Rhys Glennon '22

Kristina Pompilio 2023

Liam O'Brien 2022

Miriam Weathers '22

Luna Gizzi 2021

Charice Lawrence, CO 2023

Ruhi kamdar 2022

Graham Shelor '23

Megan Mahoney 2022

Clara Loftis 2021

Nina Ng, 2023

Luka Amazingly Persistent, 2022

Avery Dyer 2021

Helene Gusman 21'

Ashley Wang Class of 2021

Ho June Rhee 2021

Kamli Faour 2021

Rohini Prabhakar 2023

Melynda Payne '21

Praniti Agarwal '23

Bryan Currie '22

Evelyn Lane 2023
Anusha Datta '23
Lauren Ho '23
Skyler Brown 2023
Kayla Richards '22
Molly Arndt, 2023
Kayla Moore 2022
Scott (Yizhi) Li 2023.5
Emily Ballou ' 21
Olivia Blackmer, 2023
Ian Hanson '21
Shana Kushevski 2021
Rohan Datar 2023
Toni Cuevas '18
Gloria Escobedo '23
Indira Yuldasheva '22
Brandon Cuatlatl '23
Meagan Tan '21
Qing Zhao '21
Muskan Agarwal '21
Karl Lin '20
Sammy Van Cleve '22
Nora Peachin '21
Arturo Simental, 2020
Maya Matejcek
Samantha McClellan '22
Dan Levesque 2021.5
Mariana Tahiri '22
Arielle Landau '21
Annabella Twomey
Taegen Kopfler '21

Kenzo Okazaki '21
Marijke Stiffler '23
Pim Singhatiraj 2021.5
Cynthia Chen '22
Araceli Arizpe '21
Kara Zalk 2021
Michael Koutelos '20.5
Martine Ma '22.5
Michelle Marquez 2022
Roberta Finkelstein, 2021.5
Emily Allardi 2021
saher al khamash '21
Queenie Li 2022
Asian Students in Action
Lily Colón 21.5
Gabe Lefkowitz 2020
Matthew Wilkinson '23
Caitlin Barr '22.5
Masha Makutonina 2021
Zeinab Thiam '21
Andres Santana class of 2023
Jackson Tham '22
Isabel Linhares, 2022
Allan Lei '21
Nadani I. Dixon '20
Tianzhi Li '21
Keun Young Ko '21 (20.5)
Daleelah Saleh '23
Jennie Bob Bizal-Clark 2022
Ciara Carlson-Healy '22
Maddie Tango '21.5

Carl Langaker '21

Jonathon Hoey '21

Varsha Vijayakumar, '20

Theodore Culman, 2021

Elias Buurma 2021

Michel Macedo '22

